



NEIL ARMSTRONG

THEY'RE ON TENTER-HOOKS in the muckle toon o' Langholm these days. "Will he, won't he?" is the question on everybody's lips. And "he" is a VIP named Neil Armstrong. He can claim to be the first Man on the Moon.

The fact is that the noble Burgh of Langholm, population around 2300, want to add to their number by making Neil Armstrong their first Freeman. They've already asked him to accept the Freedom of Langholm and they understand that the answer is "Yes," but they've still got to see it in black and white.

The Moon Man is supposed to be appearing in Edinburgh next month, and the Langholm idea was that he should drop off at the muckle toon on his way to the Capital and receive his Freedom. But there has been no confirmation of his visit as yet.

Freedom ceremonies can't be arranged at the drop of a hat, and that's why there are furrowed brows in the Burgh. The Town Clerk of Langholm, Eddie Armstrong (no relation to Neil, though), told me that the date they were aiming at was March 12, so you can see there's not much time.

Irish claim

"Neil Armstrong is also claimed by the Irish," he explained, "because that particular branch of the family went from Fermanagh to America."

"But first of all these Armstrongs moved from Newcastle-on-Tyne to Fermanagh, so our claim is a good one."

I take it that Neil Armstrong

Will he, won't he?

THAT'S THE QUESTION
THEY'RE ASKING IN
THE MUCKLE TOON

JACK HOUSE ROUNDABOUT



is what is called Scotch-Irish, a term I never heard of until I went to the United States. Anyway, the "Chicago Tribune," no less, published a story about Neil Armstrong and his association with the muckle toon on their front page.

This was accompanied by a map of Britain. "And," says Eddie Armstrong with relish, "only two places were marked on that map — Langholm and London!"

Famous riever

Why shouldn't Newcastle-on-Tyne, which I last saw when I walked across the Borders from Gretna Green to Berwick, give Neil Armstrong their Freedom? "Because we are the Burgh," explains Mr Armstrong, "and are the people who can grant a Freedom."

I earnestly hope that Neil Armstrong can make another step for mankind and stop off at Langholm.

His ancestor was the renowned Johnnie Armstrong, who had Gilnockie Castle near by. He was an even more famous Border riever than the ancestors of Sir Alec Douglas-Home, who is always reminding us about his forebears' propensity for sheep stealing.

Let us draw a curtain over Johnnie Armstrong's unfortunate death. His descendant will get a right royal welcome if he gets to Langholm.

Adopted town

STILL they come! I mean letters from Hull. One chap has sent me an edition of "Lloyd's List" containing four or five pages on the Port of Hull. Apparently they're looking to the Common Market to solve some of the troubles there.

And Brian A. Fraser writes — "As an ex-Glasgow lad I would wholeheartedly agree with you that Hull is not a rum place to live in. I first came down here about 18 months ago to visit a girl friend (who is now my wife) and my thoughts were that I was coming to a grimy old port.

"However, once I had seen the city, I decided to make Hull my home. It was nice to hear a fellow-Glaswegian saying, 'Hull's OK after all!'"

I can see Hull offering me a job as PRO yet.



You don't give up easily, do you?